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MEN AND CIRCUMSTANCES.

WE have had accurate treatises on the effects which various occupations have upon health, but never any systematic view of the effects which they have upon the characters and moral bearing of men. Yet the one class of effects is as certain in point of fact as the other. All who have anything practically to do with men in the way of preaching to them, or in anyway seeking to modify their conduct, come to know this well, and are obliged to act accordingly, using very different means and persuasives with one from what are required for another. It is indeed an immense difficulty in the way of all practical moralists and reformers; one which they will only overcome in the degree in which they can adapt themselves to a great variety of circumstances.

One of the broadest propositions connected with the subject is, that great and constant physical toil renders the mental faculties dull. Let any one try to walk thirty miles in (say) eight hours, and he will find that, during the latter part of his task, his intellect and feelings have become stupified to a surprising degree, and it is not till he has sat down, and begun to recover from his fatigue, that he can either think or feel according to his wont. Let a gentleman, after these experiences, consider what it must be to spend ten hours every day in this torpor of the mental system, and he will be able to understand how the lumberers of America, the *navies* of our own country, and workers at coarse labour everywhere, are rough, inconsiderate, and thriftless. It readily accounts for that low state in which fishermen are everywhere found. Their work is so full of hardship and toil, that every noble faculty is benumbed. The roughnesses of their daily life bring out all the roughnesses of their own nature, as if in self-defence. In the intervals of labour, they are only fit for sensual enjoyments and entire vacuity; from which, once more plunging into their coarse labours, they have no time left for the cultivation of their better nature. No wonder that this at length tells in the course of generations, so as to produce an inferior type of brain; which it is said to do. Nor is it surprising that this class of men, and all others who labour in the like manner, live more from hand to mouth than many savage tribes. The life of the North American Indian is one which, in comparison, may be said to allow fair-play to human intelligence. He has some leisure to gather his thoughts about him, and to attend to his social duties; which the other has not. His very occupations are of a kind which exercise no small amount of intellect. The Indian is therefore found making such provision for his life, that he never knows what we call destitution. The *navie*, on the other hand, reduced to spend nearly his whole time in labours which only employ

the brute part of him, drops, as it were, reflection and foresight from his calendar of qualities, and only can use unusual gains in unusual debauchery, till penny-lessness sets him once more a-working.

We trust that no one will be alarmed at these acknowledgments, as supposing them to supply an excuse for the conduct of the coarser class of workers. Their more legitimate effect is to prompt inventions which shall supersede degrading labours. Preaching in direct contravention of evils which human nature, in connection with circumstances, must irresistibly bring forth, is preaching in vain. But when we see how things actually work, we may make some effort for their remedy. Not many years ago, the men who worked printing-presses were noted as a less steady class than their associates who composed the types. The explanation was, that they had a comparatively severe kind of labour, which tempted them to indulgence in liquor. All the stern preaching in the world would never have done so much to correct this evil as the application of steam power to the working of the press. So as to fishermen: let fishing be done in steam vessels, which can quickly go to and return from the fishing-grounds, and which will save the men from too much of both toil and exposure, and fishermen will become like other people. As to excavators, we must profess our surprise that they have as yet got so little aid from machinery. To see five hundred men labouring with spades in cutting through a gravel mound or a mass of blue clay, impresses us more forcibly with an idea of primitiveness of means, and the essential prevalence of middle-age systems in our nineteenth century, than anything we ever come in contact with. Why is there not a steam digger and blaster? Where is the American excavator? The value of such a machine as a moral reformer is not to be estimated.

When Adam Smith described the economic effects of the division of labour, he did not advert to the moral results of the system. These were not a part of his subject, but they are even more important than anything that was. If a man spends the working portion of every day of his life in making the heads of pins, it is quite impossible that he can preserve himself as a full and complete man. The making of pin heads is an extreme case; but the same is true in a degree of every kind of labour which keeps the attention absorbed for hour after hour, and day after day, in the doing of a particular class of minute and monotonous duties. Here, again, the Indian contrasts favourably, as far as the intellect is concerned. He must be a subtle warrior, a dexterous huntsman, an architect to a certain extent, and able to work at many handicrafts of a rude kind which are required in the economy of his life. Thus far more mind is necessarily brought out in him than in the executor of a department in an

English factory. The combination in the factory is a more wonderful thing, and speaks more of intellect, than any combination of doings in the savage tribe; but with the individual it is different. He loses integrality, and with that undoubtedly loses one of the most essential distinctions of a human being. This is a loss which may be said to be suffered by society in general, whenever combinations are made for economic purposes of any kind. It is experienced alike in the soldier as a little part of an army, in the clerk as a mere fragment of the unity of a counting-room or bank, in men of business generally, as only having knowledge of their particular walk or field. All such reductions of individuality have a fatal effect on mind. The better powers are unexercised, and consequently dwindle. Men, in such circumstances, are apt to become oddities or petty humorists, or simply to sink into a half-mindless state, in which they are content to perform their duties for the means of an existence rather vegetable than animal. A nation so composed must be a different thing from one in which individual men stand firmer each in his own footing. It may be a stronger nation: indeed this it probably will be, for it will be altogether a higher organic fabric, while the resulting wealth becomes in itself a mighty power. But the great mass of the component elements must be inferior. This, it must be confessed, puts society into a startling light; for if there is anything that the moralist insists upon more than another, it is, that men shall be considered as individuals. It is a problem of vast import, and of which no one can foretell the working out.

There is one form in the social arrangement which modern times have seen carried amongst us to a pitch never before known, and from which, in this excess, there cannot fail to be remarkable effects. Master and servant, employer and employed, there have always been; but there never were so many servants and employed to so few masters and employers as now. A company of three, which contracts for the making of railways, lately paid off ten thousand men in the course of a week or two. Their expenditure, mostly in wages, has occasionally reached fifteen thousand pounds a day! What was Warwick the king-maker to a grandeeship like this? Industry now has her captains of hundreds, and her captains of thousands and tens of thousands, not with so absolute a rule of the one over the other as existed amongst commanders and commanded in the old days, but with moral effects and influences not less potent. We take it to be an unavoidable consequence of the assumption of a place below another man, that we cease to feel the same independence, the same self-reliance, as in the contrary circumstances. Having now another to take care of us, we cease to take the same care of ourselves. Not allowed to act according to our own sense of the exigencies of each particular moment, we lose that vigilance, activity, and resource which we once possessed, or might have attained to possessing. On the other hand, the acquiring of mastership or patronage over a multitude as necessarily engenders feelings of pride and (not to use it in an offensive sense) self-sufficiency. If to these contrary-pulling influences we add that of money—the one kept at definite, and generally moderate incomes, the other put in the way of acquiring large capital, with all the dignity and power that thereto effeirs—we shall be inclined to regard society as in a state of polarity and divarication altogether unexampled in degree, and almost unknown in kind. Helotism we know: feudal

vassalage has been entered on the chronicles: but what may be the effects of the new nobility created by employment and capital, it has not entered into the mind of man to conceive. Obviously enough, however, it is this which is the basis of that aristocratic character remarked of our nation by foreigners, as a thing apart from, though co-existent with, an apparent tendency to democratic institutions. It is the wealth of Englishmen which makes them proud. It is the inexperience of any necessity of exertion throughout all their lives—the lot of a large class living upon paternally-acquired means—which dignifies the physiognomy of John Bull wherever he goes over the world. A power is thus erected far harder to deal with than any which rest in the constitution, or are protected by statute. It is one which no kind of Jacobinism hitherto known can touch.

That very zeal with which business is now conducted amongst us is a new element in the world, immensely modifying its inhabitants in moral respects. Nothing is now more common than to hear a man alluded to as too busy to attend to this; too much occupied to have any time for that; things which used to appear as the simplest duties of life. Many children see their father only once a week, and hardly become tolerably acquainted with him before they have to enter the world themselves. With thousands upon thousands, the idea of reading a book, or acquiring any new accomplishment of mind, is as much out of the range of possibility as a voyage to the moon. They are, morning, noon, and night, engaged in their affairs—that is, in the mere pursuit of money—with barely time for needful meals and rest. 'Why toil so hard?' 'We cannot help it. We must do as we do, if we would wish to keep our place, our rank, preserve our credit, or save our families from penury.' Terrible consideration! We wonder it does not occur to the many of them who are professedly religious men, that to give the whole mind to the behests of one desire of their nature, and that one of the meanest, is to degrade the divinity within them, and to be practically heathens. The necessity is of course merely an assumption imposed by the appetite. There is nothing to hinder men from working less, if they will be content with less. No one can doubt that this fanaticism of business must be rapidly modifying the externals of human nature in our country. A people so disposed must be something wholly different from, we shall say, such a people as lived in England in 1642. Query—Could they stand up to the same things?

Meditating on such matters, the spirit loving of its kind, and wishful of all that can increase human happiness, may well feel somewhat troubled; for though the evil may be seen, it is not so easy to see a remedy. It occurs to us that, in any efforts to this purpose, it would be well to keep chiefly in mind, as a resting-place for the foot of the moral mediciner, that inner state of man in which all of us have, as it were, a separate life. 'The merest slave may be free here. Salary may purchase all but this. The pin-head-maker, while his fingers and a small portion of mind are given to duty, may have a whole academy of thought, a whole temple of silent worship, going on in his spiritual self, beyond the ken of bystanders and the control of taskmasters. Here, even for him who 'has no time for anything,' there may occasionally be a moment for a regenerating reflection. Whatever can cultivate and invigorate this internal life, we would encourage—not to make men dreamers, but that they may continue to be men. It is a line of policy needful and good at all times, but now particularly needful and

good, when the tendencies of our external life are so dead-set towards mere wealth and all kinds of materialities, as well as to a sort of dismemberment of man himself. Everything, then, that can foster man's sense of his indivisible, unpurchasable mind—everything that can project him from the present into the future, from the seen into the unseen—everything that can help to make him pause now and then on the bustling highways of the world, and bethink him, 'I have come—from whence? I go—whither? I hang not self-sustained—from what far system of things am I depending, and to which shall I reascend?—And how shall I trim my life, or at least my inner thinking life, that it shall stand being glassed in the eternity which it must meet?'—All these things we would prompt into activity, and sustain with our whole power. To this let preacher, writer, politician, and educationist conspire, and there may still be hope for England.

THE NESTS OF FISHES.

ALMOST all the higher classes of animals assiduously perform the duties of parents to their young. They nurse, and feed, and protect them till they are able to provide for themselves. But many of the inferior animals, on the other hand, never know or care for their offspring. Not a few of them, indeed, as the insect tribe, bestow great pains in constructing nests for the eggs of their future young, and even provide and store up the food necessary for them; but here all their solicitude ends; and in many instances the parents are dead before their young come into existence. Aquatic animals exhibit what, on a casual view, would appear great carelessness in this respect. Fish deposit their spawn almost at random, and leave their ova to be hatched by the elements, and their young to provide for themselves. They form no nest, or a very rude one—the sand of the sea-shore, the small pebbles of the river or lake, or leaves of plants, or sea-weeds, receive their minute eggs. These are hurriedly and rudely covered up, if deposited in furrows of the sand, or they adhere to stones or weeds by means of a gluey mucilage by which they are enveloped. When the young fry are developed, they associate together in shoals, and roam about amid the shallow waters untended and unprotected by the larger fish, nay, sometimes even preyed upon by their own progenitors. This we might be apt to think extreme indifference, and an outrage on the great law of paternal endearment; but a little reflection will show that it is a wise adjustment of nature. In such an unstable element as water, continually agitated by currents, and incessantly changing its place, it would have been impossible for a parent fish to have kept its young family around it, or even, if it so could, to have afforded them any protection. Think, too, of a codfish surrounded by several millions of its young—the offspring of one single season! Or of an immense shoal of herrings, with each parent taking charge of its two or three millions of young, and distinguishing each among the surrounding myriads! The salmon comes into fresh-water rivers to deposit its spawn high up the stream; but its nature requires that it should return to the ocean again long before its young are able to travel: and the same remark applies to many migratory fishes, which leave the deep waters—their usual haunt—and come for a short space to the shallows to spawn.

Yet fishes, obedient to the great law of nature, show much solicitude about selecting the proper place for their spawn and future young. Every year the herring

in countless shoals makes a long journey, it is supposed, from the deep seas of the north to our shallow bays and firths; and the salmon leaves the sea, toils up the current of the river with incredible perseverance and force, overleaping the falls and rapids till it gains the smooth and shallow source where, amid the sand, the spawn is deposited, and where the future young may sport in safety amid the sunny rills, till they gain sufficient strength to swim down the stream. Some fishes, however, really make a kind of nest in the water, and assiduously tend their ova till they are hatched. This is the case with the stickleback, which constructs a nest made of pieces of grass and straw fixed among the pebbles of the stream which they inhabit. M. Coste procured some of these fishes, and putting them into basins filled with water, and the proper materials of their nests, watched their progress. A minute and very curious detail of which he lately submitted to the Academy of Sciences of Paris. The sticklebacks having selected a proper spot, set about constructing their nests. 'I saw,' says he, 'each of the males that was engaged in this work heap up in the place the selected pieces of grass of every kind, which he often brought from a great distance, seizing them with his mouth; and of these he began to form a kind of carpet. But as the materials which form the first part of his edifice might be carried away by the movements or oscillation of the water, he had the precaution to bring some sand, with which he filled his mouth, and deposited it on the nest, in order to keep it in its place. Then, in order to make all the substances thus brought together adhere to each other, he pressed his body against them, sliding slowly as if by a kind of vibratory creeping, and in this way glued them together by means of the mucus which exudes from his skin. By this operation the first collected materials form a kind of foundation or solid floor, on which the rest of the edifice is to be reared. The execution of this he continues with a feverish perseverance and agitation. In order to satisfy himself that all the parts are sufficiently united, he agitates his pectoral fins with great rapidity, in such a manner as to produce currents directed against the nest; and if he notice that the pieces of grass are moved, he presses them down with his snout, heaps sand upon them, flattens them, and glues them together again. When the process has reached this point, he chooses more solid materials—he seizes small pieces of wood or straws in his mouth, and presses them into the thick places, or on the surface of the first construction. If he finds, when attempting to introduce them, that the position does not sufficiently answer the purpose, he draws them out again, seizes them at another part, again inserts them, and pushes them forwards, until he ascertains that he has made the best possible use of them. Occasionally, however, in spite of all his care, there are portions which, owing to their shape, will not conform to the general plan. These he draws out, carries to a distance, and abandons, and proceeds to select others. When he has succeeded in building the floor and side walls, he then undertakes the roof, which is constructed of the same materials, carefully glued and compacted together by the same vibratory pressure of his body. Meanwhile he takes care to secure an opening in the centre of the nest, by repeatedly thrusting in his head and the greater part of his body.' The nest being thus finished, the male, which is distinguished by his vivid colouring, darts out and invites a female to deposit her eggs in the place which he has just prepared for their reception. The female enters, and having deposited her ova in the cavity, darts out at the opposite side at which she entered, and thus makes an open passage through both sides of the nest. Several females in succession are thus invited to deposit their spawn; and thus the nest becomes a rich magazine of ova. The male now becomes the sole guardian of this deposit; for not only do the females take no care of it, but they become its formidable enemies—forming part of those numerous coalitions

which attempt to plunder it, and satisfy their voracious appetite by devouring the ova. In his defensive exertions, no obstacle can divert him, or daunt his courage during the whole month requisite for the development of the ova. In order to strengthen the nest, he now covers it with stones, the size of which is sometimes equal to half his body, and which he moves along with great labour. In this process he always reserves one or more openings, through which he often drives currents of water by the rapid motion of his fins—these currents seem to be necessary in clearing away objects from the eggs, for if not thus cleansed, they are found all to perish. It is wonderful to see with what courage he beats away successive numbers of his foes, striking them with his snout, and erecting his long sharp spines. Sometimes, when about to be overpowered with numbers, he resorts to stratagem, and darts suddenly out of his nest, as if in pursuit of some prey. This frequently deceives the attacking sticklebacks, and they rush after him, in hopes of sharing the prey; and thus they are decoyed from the nest. As the period of hatching draws to a close, his assiduity increases: he removes the stones to give more easy access to the water, enlarges the openings, increases the frequency of the currents, and moves the eggs nearer the surface, or carries them deeper, according as circumstances require. Finally, when the eggs are hatched, he still continues to watch over the young in his nest, and does not allow them to go at liberty till they have become sufficiently active to provide the means of their own preservation.

THE VALUE OF LIFE.

AN EPISODE IN THE MEMOIRS OF A BRETON GENTLEMAN.

FROM THE FRENCH.

At the moment Joseph opened the door, and announced that the carriage was ready. My mother and sister threw themselves into my arms. 'It is not yet too late,' said they; 'give up your journey—stay with us.'

'Mother, I am now a man—I am twenty. I must not waste my life in obscurity; I must make my way either in the army or at court.'

'But what is to become of me, Bernard, when you are gone?'

'You will be happy in the success of your son, and proud of him.'

'And if you should be killed in battle?'

'What matter? What is life? Who thinks about it at twenty, when fame is to be won? I will come back to you, mother, in a few years, colonel or field-marshal, or with some fine situation at Versailles.'

'Well, and what then?'

'Why, then, I shall be treated with respect and consideration, and every hat off as I pass along.'

'And what then?'

'Why, then, I will marry my cousin Henrietta, get good husbands for my sisters, and we will all live with you in our fair domains of Brittany, as tranquil and happy as the days are long.'

'And what prevents your beginning from this very moment? Has not your father bequeathed to you one of the finest properties in the country? Is there within ten miles of us a richer domain, a more lovely residence, than that of Roche-Bernard? Are you not respected, honoured by your vassals? Have you any lack of salutations as you pass through the village? Be intreated, my son; stay among your friends, with your sisters, with your aged mother, whom, it may be, you would not find here on your return. Waste not in vainglory, or shorten by care and disquiet of every kind, those days which even now pass swiftly on. Life is sweet, my son, and sunny are the skies of Brittany.'

As she spoke, she drew me to the window, and pointed to the broad glades of the park; to the old chestnut trees now in full foliage; the lilacs; the honey-suckles embalming the air and glistening in the sun.

In the anteroom were waiting some of my dependants, whose sorrowful silence seemed also to say, 'Do not go, master; do not go.' Hortense, my elder sister, embraced me in an agony of tears, and my little sister Amelia clung to me with convulsive sobs. I tore myself from them: 'I am twenty—I must seek fame, glory—I must go!' and I darted into the hall. A female form stood on the staircase; it was Henrietta. She spoke not a word, shed not a tear, but she was as pale as death, and trembled till she could scarcely stand, while with her handkerchief she waved a last adieu, and then fell back senseless. I ran to her, I raised her, pressed her to my bosom, swore to her eternal love; but as soon as I was assured she had revived, I left her to the care of my mother and sister, and ran to the carriage without venturing a second look. One glance more at Henrietta, and I could not have gone. A few moments, and the carriage was rapidly pursuing its way along the high road.

For a long time I thought only of Henrietta, of my sisters, of my mother, and of all the happiness I was leaving behind me; but as the turrets of Roche-Bernard were lost to my sight, these ideas began gradually to fade away before the brilliant visions of glory and ambition that now presented themselves to my mind. How many plans did I form!—how many castles in the air did I build!—how many exploits did I perform in that one day's journey! Riches, honours, dignities, success of every kind—nothing was too high for me: I deserved everything, and I granted myself everything; and gradually rising in rank as I proceeded on my way, by the time I arrived at the inn where I was to stop that night, I was duke and peer, governor of the province, and Marshal of France. The voice of my servant, addressing me by the more humble title of 'sir,' roused me from my dream, and compelled me to abdicate my newly-acquired dignities.

The next day, and many following days, the same dreams, the same intoxication. I was going to Sedan, to the Duke de C—, an old friend of my father, and a patron of the family. He was to take me with him to Paris about the end of the month, to introduce me at Versailles, and by his interest obtain for me a company of dragoons. It was dark when I arrived at Sedan, and knowing that at that hour I could not intrude upon my patron, I deferred my visit till the next day, and took up my abode in the smallest hotel of the town, but that which was the usual resort of the military; for Sedan is a garrison town—a fortified place: the streets have a warlike aspect, and the very citizens a martial air, that seems intended to give strangers to understand, 'We are the countrymen of the great Turenne.'

I supped at the table-d'hôte, and in the course of conversation inquired the distance of the residence of the Duke de C— from the town. 'Three leagues' was the answer, 'and any one will show you the way; it is well known in the country. It was there the great general, the illustrious Fabert, drew his last breath.' And then the conversation turned upon Marshal Fabert. This was quite natural among a set of young officers. His battles, his achievements, were discussed, and honourable mention was made of the modesty which induced him to decline the patent of nobility and the collars of the several orders offered him by Louis XIV. But more especially did they dwell upon the marvellous good fortune which had raised him from the private soldier to the rank of Marshal of France. Being at that time the only instance of such a wondrous elevation, popular report attributed it to supernatural agency. It was whispered, even during the lifetime of Fabert, that from his childhood he had dealt in magic, and had made a compact with the demon. And our landlord, who possessed no small share of Breton credulity, attested in the gravest and most solemn way, that at the château of the Duke de C—, where Fabert had died, a black man, whom no one knew, had been seen to enter the room of the

dying man, and then disappear, carrying with him the soul of the marshal, which he had formerly bought: nay, more, that in the month of May, the very time of Fabert's death, the aforesaid black man appeared every night bearing a light. The time passed in laughing over this story till we separated for the night.

Early the next day I repaired to the abode of the Duke de C—, a large Gothic manor-house, that at any other time I should not have particularly remarked, but which I now looked at, I confess, with some little interest, as I remembered our landlord's story of the preceding evening.

The servant, in answer to my inquiry for the duke, said he would go see if his lordship were at home, and left me in a kind of armoury filled with crosses, hunting implements, and family portraits. I waited some time: no one came. I grew somewhat impatient, and asked myself, 'Was my career of glory to begin by dancing attendance in an antechamber?' I had already reckoned three times over the family portraits, and every joist in the ceiling, when I heard a slight noise in the wainscoting. It was a door which the wind had half-opened, and which now gave to my view a very handsome boudoir, with two large windows and a glass door looking out upon a noble park. I was advancing into the apartment, when my steps were suddenly arrested by an object hitherto unperceived. It was a man lying on a couch, with his back to the door by which I had entered. He suddenly started up, and without perceiving me, ran towards the window. Tears coursed each other down his cheeks, and dark despair seemed stamped on every feature. He remained motionless for some time, with his head buried in his hands; then with hasty strides began to traverse the apartment, till he came close to me. He started as he perceived me; and shocked and confused at my intrusion, I stammered out a few words of apology.

'Who are you, and what do you want?' cried he in a loud tone, and seizing me by the arm.

'I am the Chevalier Bernard of Roche-Bernard, and I am just arrived from Brittany.'

'I know, I know,' said he, throwing himself into my arms; then making me sit down beside him, spoke to me so warmly of my father, and my whole family, with whom he appeared to be so intimately acquainted, that I had no doubt I was speaking to the master of the house.

'You are Monsieur de C—, I presume?' said I.

He arose, and with a look of great agitation and excitement, he said, 'I was once; I am no longer—I am no longer.' Then seeing my astonishment, he exclaimed, 'Not another word, young man; I must not be questioned.'

'I have been the involuntary witness, my lord, of your emotion, your sorrow; and if attachment, if friendship could be any solace to you, gladly would I offer it.'

'Yes, yes, you are right; not that you can in any way avert my fate, but at least you can be the depositary of my last wishes: it is the only service I can ask at your hands.'

He carefully closed the door, then returned to sit beside me. Almost trembling with emotion, I waited for him to speak. When words came, they were grave and solemn. His countenance had an expression which I had never before seen in any human face. He was pale, ghastly pale, while his black eyes glared upon me at times with an unearthly fire, and his lips contracted into a bitter, I had almost said an infernal smile.

'What I am about to tell you,' said he, 'will bewilder, amaze you. You will doubt; you will disbelieve. Little marvel that you should, when there are moments when I, too, doubt. Oh how gladly would I always doubt! But the proofs are too strong, the facts too stubborn; and is there not in everything that surrounds us, in our very organisation, many other mysteries which we are obliged to acknowledge, even though, to our darkened minds, they are inexplicable?'

He stopped a moment, as if to collect his thoughts;

then passing his hand over his forehead, went on. 'I was born in this château. I had two brothers, both elder than I, to whom would devolve the family estate, the family honours. I had nothing to expect but the gown and band of an abbé; and yet thoughts of glory, of renown, of ambition, fired my brain, and swelled my throbbing heart. Unhappy in my obscurity, panting for celebrity, I thought only of the means of acquiring it, and this one idea engrossed me, to the exclusion of every pleasure, every other object in life. The present was nothing to me; I existed only in the future, and that future presented itself to me under the darkest colours. I was nearly thirty, and was yet nobody. At that time many were the brilliant literary reputations attained in the capital, and reaching us even in the provinces. How often did I say to myself, "If I could even make a name in the republic of letters, it would still be fame, and in it only is happiness." As the confidant of my cares, of my aspirations, I had an old negro servant, who had been in the château long before my birth: he certainly was the oldest person in the house, for no one could remember his having come into it. The people of the country went so far as to say he had known Marshal Fabert, and attended him on his deathbed.'

At this instant he paused on seeing my involuntary gesture of surprise, and asked what was the matter. 'Nothing; a sudden start,' I replied; but I could not help thinking of the black man of our landlord's tale.

M. de C— continued: 'One day I was abandoning myself, in the presence of Yago—such was the negro's name—to paroxysms of despair, to lamentations over the inglorious obscurity in which I was condemned to waste existence, and I at length exclaimed, "I would cheerfully forfeit ten years of my life to be placed in the first rank of celebrity as an author." "Ten years," said Yago coolly: "that is a great deal, and a dear purchase for a trifle of so little value. No matter; I accept your ten years. I take them. You must remember your promise; I will keep mine." I need not tell my surprise at his words; but taking for granted that age had disordered his faculties, I only shrugged my shoulders, and thought no more of his folly. A few days after, I left the château for Paris. There I obtained admission into literary society; and incited by example, and encouraged by my first success, I gave to the world several works, which soon placed me on the pinnacle of fame. The journals lauded me till all Paris re-echoed with my name; nay, it was but yesterday, young man, that you paid to it the tribute of your admiration.'

Another gesture of surprise on my part interrupted this strange recital.

'You are not, then, the Duke de C—?' I exclaimed.

'I am not,' answered he coldly.

'It must be,' said I to myself, 'some celebrated author. Can he be Marmontel, D'Alembert, or Voltaire?'

The stranger sighed; a smile of mingled disdain and regret just played upon his lips, and he resumed his recital.

'The literary reputation I had so coveted soon became insufficient for so ardent a disposition as mine. I aspired to noble triumphs, and I said to Yago, who had followed me to Paris, and was my constant attendant, "There is no real glory, no true fame, to be acquired save in the career of arms. What, after all, is the man of letters—the poet? A mere nothing. Give me the great captain, the great general; this is the destiny I covet; and for a high military renown I would be content to part with ten of the years that yet remain to me." "I accept them," answered Yago. "I take them; they belong to me. Do not forget that they are mine."'

The unknown again paused, seeing the uneasy surprise, the hesitating doubts, which my every feature expressed.

'Did I not say it would be so, young man? You cannot believe me; it seems to you a dream, a wild illusion. So it does to me; and yet the rank, the honours

I obtained, were no illusion. The soldiers I have led on to the fight, the citadels I have stormed, the victories with which France has resounded, all this was my work, all this glory was mine."

While he paced the apartment with hasty step, and spoke with a vehemence, a passionate excitement, that seemed to shake his whole frame, I stood petrified with astonishment. "Who, then, was this man? Coligny?—Richelieu?—Marshal Saxe?"

Deep depression now succeeded the excitement; and the unknown, again approaching me, said gloomily, 'Yago had dealt truly—he kept his promise; and when, later still, I turned in disgust from that vain shadow, military glory—tired of grasping at smoke, at a vapour—and asked of him to give me the only thing real and positive in the world—when I offered to barter for wealth, for gold, five or six years more of my life, he acceded to my wish. Yes, young man, yes; I have seen fortune second surpass all my desires: lands, forests, castles; this very morning all these were mine; and if you doubt me, if you doubt Yago, only wait; he will soon be here, and you shall see for yourself, with your own eyes, that what is so bewildering to you and to me is unhappily but too sad a reality.'

The unknown went to the mantelpiece, and looking at the clock upon it, he started back in terror, and said in a faint whisper, 'This morning, at break of day, I felt so much exhausted, so weak, that I could scarcely get out of bed. I rang for my valet; Yago answered the bell. "What can be the matter with me?" I said. "Master, nothing but what is quite natural. The hour is come, the moment is at hand." "What hour?" I asked. "Cannot you guess? Heaven had destined for you sixty years of life; you were thirty when I first began to obey you." "Yago, you do but jest," I exclaimed in terror. "I jest not, master; in five years you had expended in fame twenty-five years of existence. You gave them to me; they belong to me; and that portion of your life which you bartered away is now to be added to mine." "What! is this the price of your services?" "Others have paid still dearer for them; you may be satisfied." "Silence—silence! I command you. It is not possible, it is not real." "Be it so. But prepare: you have but half an hour to live." "You are deceiving—mocking me!" "Not at all. You need only calculate yourself. Thirty-five years that you have actually lived, and twenty-five that you lost, makes a total of sixty. That was your number; every one has his own." And he was about to leave me. I felt my strength diminishing, my life escaping from me. "Yago, Yago!" I cried in agony, "give me but four hours—four little hours!" "No, no," answered he; "it would be to take them from myself, and I know better than you do the value of life. I would not give two hours of it for all that tempted you. Gold would not buy them." "Give me four hours, and I resign to you the wealth for which I have sacrificed so much. Only four hours, and I renounce my gold, my riches, my broad lands." "Well, you have been a good master, and I care not if I do something to please you. I consent." I felt my strength returning, and I cried, "Four hours! but four hours! After all, what are they? Yago, Yago! give me but four more, and I renounce my literary fame—those works which placed me on so high a pinnacle of glory." "Four hours for a puff of smoke!" said the negro contemptuously. "It is too much to give you; but no matter, I will not refuse your last request." "Not the last! Oh no, not the last, good Yago!" cried I, clasping my hands imploringly. "I conjure thee, give me till night—twelve hours—the whole day, and let my achievements, my victories, my military renown, pass for ever into oblivion—be for ever obliterated from the memory of man! This one day, Yago, this one whole day, and I shall deem myself too happy!" "You abuse my compassion," said he, "and I am making a fool's bargain. No matter, I will give you till sunset. Then you must ask no more. To-night I come for thee!"

'And he left me,' pursued the unknown in a tone of agonized despair; 'and this is the last day of my life!' Then approaching the glass door, which opened on the park, he exclaimed, 'No more shall I behold that beautiful sky, the murmuring rivulet—no more breathe the balmy air of spring! Fool that I was! For twenty years longer I might have enjoyed those common blessings that God gives to all, those blessings to which I was insensible, and which now, when too late, I estimate at their full value. Look there, look there!' and he pointed to a group of peasantry who were crossing the park, and singing on their way to their work, 'What would I not give now to share their toils and their poverty! What would I not give, that the motive which impelled me to action had been the desire to be useful to others, not to gain vainglory for myself! But I have now nothing more to give, nothing more to expect here below: nothing—not even misfortune!'

At this instant a sunbeam, a ray from the bright May sun, fell upon his wild and haggard countenance. He seized my arm in a kind of delirium, and said, 'Do you see yon bright sun? And I must leave it all! Then let me enjoy it at least a while: let me taste the full beauty of this cool, calm day, which for me has no to-morrow!' Then darting from the room into the park, he rushed down one of the avenues, and disappeared from my view before I had time to detain him, which, to say the truth, I should not have had the power to do. I had fallen upon the couch bewildered, overwhelmed, by what I had just seen and heard. I now arose; I shook myself; I walked about the room, to convince myself that I was awake, and not under the influence of a dream. At that moment the door of the boudoir was thrown open, and a servant announced the Duke de C—.

A man about sixty, with a striking expression of countenance, advanced towards me with extended hand, and apologised for having kept me waiting so long. 'I was not at home,' he said. 'I have but just returned from the next town, where I went to consult a physician about the state of my youngest brother, the Comte de C—.'

'I trust there is nothing serious the matter with him, that you have no fears for his life?'

'Thank Heaven his life is not in danger,' answered the duke; 'but in early youth ambitious hopes, aspirations after fame, after the bubble reputation, excited him to a degree that amounted to disease; and lately a severe fit of illness, which had nearly proved fatal, has left a kind of delirium and alienation of mind, the effect of which is to persuade him that he has but one day to live. This is his mania.'

Here was a full explanation.

'And now,' continued the duke, 'we must think of your affair, and see what can be done to promote your object. We will go at the end of this month to Versailles; I will present you.'

'I am not the less grateful for your kindness, my lord, though I am under the necessity of declining to avail myself of it.'

'What! have you given up the court, and all the advantages awaiting you there?'

'Yes, my lord.'

'But bear in mind that, with the interest I can command, you would make rapid way; and with a little assiduity and a little patience, you might, in about ten years—'

'Ten years lost!' cried I.

'Well,' he resumed in some surprise, 'is not this a cheap purchase for fortune, honours, fame? Come, come, my dear young friend, we will start for Versailles.'

'Pardon me, my lord, I will start for Brittany; and I beg again to offer you warm thanks for myself and my family.'

'This is absolute folly!' exclaimed the duke.

But for my part, I recollected what I had just seen and heard, and I said to myself, 'It is true wisdom.'

The next day saw me on my way home. With what delight did I see once more my fair domain of Roche-Bernard, the old trees of the park, the sunny skies of Brittany. I greeted once more my vassals, my sisters, my mother; and once again did I find happiness, never more to part with it, for the next week I was married to Henrietta.

THE LEARNED HERDSMAN OF COSSE DAUDE.

'IDLENESS is the parent of every vice,' is a saying that every one has heard, and it is as true as it is trite. How often do we see it exemplified as we pass through life! Many a sad catalogue of genius wasted, of talents dissipated, and of opportunities thrown away, might be furnished to show its justice; and many a dismal tale might be told within the prison, and at the gallows, in proof of its truth. But we gladly turn from the melancholy picture it presents, to the contemplation of the success which almost invariably attends industry. The benefits which industry confers on the world at large are incalculable. There is not a necessary that we possess, nor a luxury that we enjoy, which is not the fruit of industry; and while we are reaping the rich harvest it has spread before us, the patient zeal of the labourer should often be called to mind. How many have devoted themselves, with unwearied perseverance, to studies as difficult as they are important: to what privations have they cheerfully submitted—how have they watched by the midnight lamp while others slept—how have they abstained from the social intercourse in which others freely indulge—how have they endured fatigue and cold while others enjoyed all the comforts of warmth and of repose! But let it not be supposed that they are without their compensations. The snatches of repose and social intercourse which the labourer and the mechanic enjoy, are peculiarly exhilarating and renovating; the severest stretch of intellectual exertion is accompanied by the elevating hope that it may lead to the elucidation of some contested point, or the discovery of some latent principle, which lightens all the toil, and compensates for every privation.

When we turn to the biography of the learned, we are struck by the unremitting industry with which many have sought the fountains at which to slake their thirst for knowledge, and by the difficulties which they have overcome in attaining their object. A slight sketch of what was acquired in this way by an extraordinary man may not be unacceptable. Excluded from every advantage, and with difficulty obtaining the most scanty means of information, John Ludwig arrived at attainments that would have done honour to the professor of a university. He was born in the year 1715, in the village of Cosse Daude, and was sent to school at six years of age. The Bible was the book in which he was taught to read, and the delight which he took in it was intense; he soon felt an ardent longing to read other books, but none were within his reach. In about a year he began to learn to write, and when he had made some progress, he was given books from which to copy certain sentences. He read these books again and again with the greatest delight, and devoted himself almost entirely day and night to copying out the passages which pleased him most, and patiently collecting into a regular series such paragraphs as bore upon any subject or event which excited his interest. When he was ten years of age he was put into arithmetic; but he found it difficult, and could not understand it without explanation. As his master was not willing to take any trouble which he could avoid, he told him to refer to the rules. Poor Ludwig found himself at such a loss to comprehend the bearing of these rules, that he became thoroughly disgusted with the pursuit, which scolding and beating had not rendered more fascinating, and left the school without having learned anything but reading, writing, and his catechism.

He then went to tend cows, and spent his days in the fields, where all he had learned was after a time forgotten. He became clownish and listless, and gradually gave into the habits of the idle and vicious with whom he was associated; but still, in the midst of his dissipated career, he preserved the wish to surpass others, and often recalled to memory the praise bestowed by his master when he had excelled his schoolfellows in reading and writing. He sighed for the same gratification again, but thought it was now beyond his reach. When he was about twenty, he purchased a small Bible, to which was added a catechism with references to a great number of texts, upon which the answers were founded. Ludwig was continually looking through his Bible for the passages; but finding it tedious, he resolved to have the whole together, and transcribed the catechism, with all the texts at full length, in those passages in which they had been merely referred to: this manuscript filled two quires of paper. Though the writing was scarcely legible when he began, it was quite plain long before it was finished; so faithfully did this exercise revive the art which, from neglect, was almost lost. No doubt the task produced the most salutary effect upon his mind and conduct. This indeed may be inferred, when we find that in the following year he was appointed to receive the Excise of the little district in which he lived. The situation, though one always held by a peasant, was of some trust, which would not have been conferred on one who was ill-conducted and reckless.

Ludwig found that it was now absolutely necessary that he should understand the two first rules of arithmetic—addition and subtraction—as, without being conversant with them, he could not keep his accounts. To do this in a masterly manner, he determined, at whatever loss of time or exercise of patience, to conquer his distaste for the pursuit, and by diligent application, to arrive at a thorough knowledge of arithmetic. He now deeply regretted that he had not availed himself of the advantages once within his reach, and lamented bitterly that he should now be without an instructor. His mind was continually on the rack to devise some way of supplying the want. At last he suddenly recollected having seen a book with one of his schoolfellows, from which his master was in the habit of giving examples of the rules to the scholars. He hastened to seek out his schoolfellow, and was fortunate enough to find him, and to learn that he still possessed the precious volume. This was readily lent to him. His impatience to study its contents was so great, that he earnestly read it as he went along. A commencement undertaken with such energy, was followed up by the most unremitting application; and in six months he was master of the rule of three with fractions. He became intensely anxious to know more, and to meet with a more difficult book. Having at length procured one, in which he was able to exercise himself in the most intricate and complicated calculations, he soon made himself master of it. Shortly after, a treatise on geometry by Pachek fell into his hands. This study he was obliged to lay aside after a time, the season requiring that his constant attention should be given to his fields and vines. The great severity of the winter of 1740 obliged him to keep within doors; and wishing for employment, he resumed the work on geometry. He at length understood some of the leading principles, and then procured a little box ruler, and an old pair of compasses, on one point of which he mounted the end of a quill, cut into a pen. 'With these instruments,' as we find from Doddsley's Annual Register, 'he employed himself incessantly in making various geometrical figures on paper, to illustrate the theory by a solution of the problems.' He thus busied himself during the winter months; and when early spring came, he was in an ecstasy at the knowledge which he had gained during the season of his confinement.

His appetite for learning increased by what it fed upon; every acquisition of knowledge but excited the

thirst for more. But he was recalled to the fields, by the necessity which he was under of procuring the means of subsistence. He was unable to purchase the books and instruments necessary for the pursuit of the science in which he had so ardently engaged. In this emergency an artificer kindly 'supplied him with the figures which were represented by the diagrams in his book, made of wood.* With these, whenever he had a spare moment, Ludwig went to work. He had contrived to scrape together a little money for the purchase of a book at the fair. He then procured three small volumes, by which he obtained a complete knowledge of trigonometry. He then succeeded in getting an introduction to astronomy, having resolved to pursue that science. He immediately devoted himself to it with the greatest energy, his invention and ingenuity supplying him with substitutes for the proper instruments. The word 'philosophy,' which had often struck him as he studied geometry and astronomy, became the constant subject of his thoughts. Was it the name of some science of paramount importance? was a question which he frequently put to himself. Being impatient to discover what it was, he was continually on the watch, hoping that some means of explanation might offer. One day he procured a book called 'An Introduction to the Knowledge of God, of Man, and the Universe;' but though he met with much that was highly interesting to him, the book did not go far enough, and he went to Dresden, to inquire among the booksellers which was the most celebrated writer on philosophy. The works of Wolfius were recommended, and as soon as he could, he bought his 'Logic.' He laboured for a year at this, still keeping up his other acquisitions. He next bought an abridgment of 'Wolfius's Mathematical Principles,' as his finances did not permit his purchase of the work in its extended form. From this book he derived the greatest advantage, and considerable pleasure. It engaged him from October 1743 to February 1745. He then studied physics and metaphysics. To his great delight, he procured from a dealer in old books 'Wolfius's Mathematical Principles' at full length. A work after which his heart had so long panted. The study of this book cost him intense labour, and occupied him for a year every moment that he could spare from his business, or steal from the hours of rest. He then took up the study of Kahehl's 'Law of Nature,' and of a work on the terrestrial and celestial globes. These were the books from which he gained a stock of information seldom to be met with, even among those who have had the advantage of the best university education, and free access to the finest public libraries.

Mr Hoffman, who was chief commissary of Excise in Dresden and its neighbouring villages, while examining the accounts of the peasants who were employed under him, was told that there was one among them, called John Ludwig, who was a very extraordinary person; 'who, though poor, and with a large family, was continually reading in books, and very often stood the greater part of the night at his door gazing at the stars.' From what he heard, Mr Hoffman felt the greatest curiosity to see Ludwig, and therefore sent for him. He had pictured him to himself as a man of most prepossessing appearance, with an air greatly superior to his station, and a countenance which would at once impress others with a consciousness of his intellectual powers. When Ludwig entered the room, Hoffman's feelings underwent a complete revulsion, and it was with deep disappointment he looked on the uncouth boor who presented himself. His hair, all neglected, hung down over his eyes; his aspect bespoke all that was sordid and stupid; and his manner was as dogged and unprepossessing as his appearance. Mr Hoffman, after looking at him for a moment in silence, and the first shock over, hoped that, notwithstanding his unpromising appearance, his mental superiority would discover itself when he spoke, and he asked him if what his neighbours had said of his read-

ing and studying was true? He received the following blunt and surly answer, 'What neighbour has told you that I read and studied? If I have studied, I have studied for myself. I don't desire that you or anybody else should know anything of the matter.' Though so much discouraged and disappointed, Mr Hoffman determined to ask some questions connected with arithmetic and the rudiments of astronomy. The answers he received filled him with still greater surprise. They were such as to inspire the highest respect and admiration, and would have done honour to those most renowned for their proficiency in the sciences.

Mr Hoffman was so much delighted, that he prevailed on him to spend some time at his house; and in their subsequent conversations, his surprise and admiration increased. To the most difficult and abstract questions which he put to him, Ludwig replied with the most perfect ease and precision. During his stay, Mr Hoffman dressed him in his own gown and other habiliments, which seemed to produce a magical effect; his very accent and dialect assumed something of refinement, and Hoffman acknowledged, with great simplicity, that he felt himself inclined to treat him with more deference than he had done before he had made the change from his coarse dress, although that change had been made in his presence, and with the clothes supplied from his own wardrobe. During Ludwig's stay there was an eclipse of the sun, and Mr Hoffman proposed that he should make his observations as an astronomer, and furnished him with such instruments as were requisite. The restless impatience with which the herdsman waited for the eclipse cannot be described. He had never seen a telescope; and to look through it and view the heavens, which he had never before contemplated but with the naked eye, filled him with such rapturous anticipations, that for several days he could scarcely eat or sleep. The day at length arrived, but unfortunately, just before the eclipse, the sky became overcast by clouds, which did not pass away till it was over. What Ludwig suffered cannot be told; as the clouds gathered, he fixed his eyes upon them in unspeakable agony, and watched in breathless impatience, in hopes they might disperse; but as they advanced towards the sun, and then rested on it, he stood transfixed. When the eclipse was over, he became nearly frantic with grief and disappointment.

Mr Hoffman went to visit Ludwig in his own dwelling, feeling great curiosity to see it, with its library, study, and the instruments which he used. He found it a most wretched cottage. Its smoke-stained walls were nearly black, yet ornamented with diagrams and figures traced in chalk. In one corner there was a bed, and a cradle in another. Three pieces of wood laid side by side over two tressels served for a writing-table; it was covered with fragments of writing paper, on which were written extracts from books, and various calculations and geometrical figures. The library and museum were in one, and occupied a shelf. The part which formed the library contained the books already mentioned as having been purchased by Ludwig; the remainder was appropriated to the museum, which consisted of the compass and the ruler before described, and a wooden square, and a pair of six-inch globes. In this miserable cabin Ludwig dwelt till the year 1754; and while so ardent in his scientific pursuits, he was at the same time as indefatigable in his exertions to earn his morsel of bread. Sometimes he might be seen carrying a basket at his back; at other times wheeling a barrow along through the village, and crying such vegetables as he could offer for sale. By those who would have struck a hard bargain with him, he was often abused and called names; but Ludwig showed on these occasions that he was not a philosopher in theory alone, for he bore these insults with imperturbable indifference, never condescending to make any reply. The kindness of Mr Hoffman enabled him to add considerably to his comforts. He presented him with one hundred crowns, so that he was able to build himself a dwelling in the

midst of his vineyard, and to furnish it with various articles. But what made him more happy than all, was the considerable addition which it was now in his power to make to his library. He declared to Mr Hoffman that he would not accept the whole province in which he lived, upon condition that he should renounce his studies; and that he would rather subsist upon bread and water, than give up what constituted his chief happiness.

We rejoice that, like the writer of a fairy tale, we have been able to bring our hero to this consummation of all his wishes; and in our gleanings, we were much gratified in finding such an example of what can be achieved with the aid of a very few well-selected books by one ardent in the pursuit of knowledge.

THE NATIONAL CLOCK.

THE publication of certain parliamentary papers furnishes us with several particulars respecting the great clock which it is proposed to construct in the tower of the new Houses of Parliament. It will be, when completed, the most powerful clock of the kind in the kingdom. According to the specification, it is to 'strike the hours on a bell of from eight to ten tons, and, if practicable, chime the quarters upon eight bells, and show the time upon four dials about thirty feet in diameter.' With the exception of a skeleton dial at Malines, the above dimensions surpass those of any other clock face in Europe. The dial of St Paul's is as yet the largest in this country with a minute hand: it is eighteen feet in diameter. Most of the clocks in Belgium which strike on large bells have to be wound up every day; but the new one is to be an eight-day clock: and, as we are informed, every resource of modern art and science will be made use of to render it a perfect standard.

No better guarantee for accuracy can be had than the fact, that the whole of the work, from first to last, will be under the direction and approval of Mr Airy the astronomer-royal, who has been consulted throughout by the government. Among the conditions for the construction of the clock drawn up by this gentleman, we find—the frame to be of cast-iron, wheels of hard bell-metal, with steel spindles, working in bell-metal bearings, and to be so arranged, that any one may be taken out to be cleaned without disturbing the others. Accuracy of movement to be insured by a dead-beat escapement, compensating pendulum, and going fusee. The first blow of the hammer when striking the hour to be within a second of the true time. We are glad to see that it is in contemplation to take advantage of one of the most interesting inventions of the day for a galvanic communication between the clock and the Royal Observatory at Greenwich. In Mr Airy's words, 'The striking detent is to have such parts, that whenever need shall arise, one of the two following plans may be adopted (as, after consultation with Mr Wheatstone or other competent authorities, shall be judged best), either that the warning movement may make contact, and the striking movement break contact, for a battery, or that the striking movement may produce a magneto-electric current. Apparatus shall be provided which will enable the attendant to shift the connection, by means of the clock action, successively to different wires of different hours, in case it shall hereafter be thought desirable to convey the indications of the clock to several different places.' Should this plan be carried out, a signal may be conveyed to Greenwich with every stroke of the hammer, and thus insure an accuracy never before attempted.

The Royal Exchange clock is said to be at present the best in the kingdom, and so true, that a person standing in the street may take correct time from the face; the first stroke of each hour is accurate to a second. The papers before us contain the names of three candidates for the honour of making the national clock—

Mr Vulliamy, who states his grandfather to have been clockmaker to George II.; Mr Dent, the maker of the Exchange clock; and Mr Whitehurst of Derby. Two estimates have been sent in, one for L.1600, the other, L.3373; but owing to some differences of opinion, and the withdrawal of one or two of the names, the maker does not yet appear to have been decided on.

The explanations to the plans drawn up by the competitors contain remarks, among other matters, as to the relative merits of cable-laid, catgut, or wire rope, for lines to the new clock. Wire rope is used for the Exchange clock; and, according to the manufacturer, a wire rope half an inch in diameter will bear eighteen hundredweight without breaking. The four sets of hands, with the motion wheels, it has been calculated, will weigh twelve hundredweight; the head of the hammer, two hundred pounds; the weights, from one hundred and fifty to three hundred pounds; and the pendulum bob, three hundredweight. One of the candidates proposes to jewel the escapement pallet with sapphires, as preferable to the stones generally made use of. The hands are to keep going while the clock is being wound up; but the motion of the minute hand is not to be constant; it will move once every twenty seconds, when it will go over a space of nearly four inches.

In many of the public clocks on the continent the whole of the works are highly polished—a 'luxury' which, it has been suggested, had better be dispensed with in the present instance, as it creates trouble from the rusting of the wheels, without adding in the least to the value or accuracy of the mechanism. Whatever be the final decision of the Board of Works, we trust that the astronomer-royal's recommendation, with regard to facilities for the admission of visitors, will be adopted to the letter. 'As it is intended,' he says, 'that this clock should be one of which the nation may be proud, and in which the maker ought to feel that his credit is deeply concerned, I would propose that the access to it should be made good, and even slightly ornamented, and that facility should be given to the inspection of the clock by mechanics and by foreigners.'

CHLOROFORM—A NEW MEANS OF PRODUCING INSSENSIBILITY TO PAIN.

THE use of ether as a means of producing insensibility during surgical operations was the great novelty and wonder of the beginning of this year. Just as it is closing, a new and much more effective, as well as convenient means of producing this effect, is brought before the world. The discoverer in this case is Professor Simpson of the Edinburgh university, who has all along been a conspicuous advocate for ether inhalation, using it in his own eminent obstetric practice with distinguished success. Regretting certain difficulties attending this medicament, Dr Simpson has been for months engaged in experimenting with new agents, and at length he has found an unusual degree of efficiency in *chloroform*, or perchloride of formyle—a pure colourless liquid of recent discovery, which it is perhaps unnecessary in this place to describe more particularly. A teaspoonful of this fluid sprinkled on a handkerchief, and held to the nose or mouth while breathing, will throw most persons into a kind of swoon or sleep in from one to three minutes. Being rather pleasant to the feelings, as well as cleanly, and of neat and ready application, it is obviously a great improvement upon ether.

A pamphlet published by Dr Simpson* makes us aware of several cases in which the new agent has been used with success. A poor lady, who, in a previous confinement, had been three days in her critical state, and only delivered at the expense of the life of her child, was, a few days before we write, relieved without her own consciousness. To all appearance, a very dangerous crisis was thus eluded. Professor Miller had an

* Sutherland and Knox, Princes Street, Edinburgh. 1847.

operation to perform upon a Highland boy of four or five years old, who could speak nothing but Gaelic, and with whom it was of course the more difficult to deal, as he could not be made to understand what was desired of him. After a few inhalations administered by compulsion, he ceased to cry or move, and fell into a sound sleep. 'A deep incision was now made down to the diseased bone; and by the use of the forceps, nearly the whole of the radius, in the state of sequestrum, was extracted. During this operation, and the subsequent examination of the wound by the finger, not the slightest evidence of the suffering of pain was given. He still slept on soundly, and was carried back to his ward in that state. Half an hour afterwards, he was found in bed, like a child newly awakened from a refreshing sleep, with a clear merry eye and placid expression of countenance, wholly unlike what is found to obtain after ordinary etherisation. On being questioned by a Gaelic interpreter, who was found among the students, he stated that he had never felt any pain, and that he felt none now. On being shown his wounded arm, he looked much surprised, but neither cried nor otherwise expressed the slightest alarm.' A young lady had a tumour removed from the jaw with equal unconsciousness of pain. On the contrary, she had experienced pleasing sensations, 'and her manageableness during the operation was as perfect as if she had been a wax doll or a lay figure.'

We have had an opportunity of seeing some experiments performed with chloroform, but not for a surgical purpose. We saw it inhaled by at least twenty persons, men and women, all of whom became insensible to pain. Some had a short, pleasing slumber, during which the mind was the theatre of strange but not distressing dreams. Others were exhilarated in a greater or less degree, and made demonstrations which might fairly be presumed to depend in some measure on the excitement attending company. One, for instance, spoke of his love secrets; another shouted as at an exciting toast at a public dinner. It appears, however, that the exhilaration is much less likely to take place when the inhalation is given in quiet circumstances. No one felt the slightest consequent uneasiness from the experiment. Indeed the whole matter looked much like a brief intoxication, very suddenly induced, and as suddenly recovered from.

The means now undoubtedly exist in perfection of extinguishing pain in all circumstances. Such is the announcement, and no less, which we must make to our readers! A soldier may now take a phial of chloroform to the field with him, and if it be his fate to be wounded, and to lie a night without relief, he may inhale the vapour and be at ease. A delicate patient, about to submit to an operation feared to be too great for the nervous energy to sustain, may take this inhalation, and his life is safe from at least the shock of the pain. A peculiar class of female sufferings may be said to be abolished from the earth by this simple fluid. How the heart throbs responsive to the expression used by Dr Simpson in his pamphlet!—'I most conscientiously believe that the proud mission of the physician is distinctly twofold—namely, to alleviate human suffering, as well as preserve human life.' We conclude with another remark of our learned physician, which seems to us possessed of much interest. 'It is perhaps,' says he, 'not unworthy of remark, that when Soubeiran, Liebig, and Dumas engaged, a few years back, in those inquiries and experiments by which the formation and composition of chloroform was first discovered, their sole and only object was the investigation of a point in philosophical chemistry. They laboured for the pure love and extension of knowledge. They had no idea that the substance to which they called the attention of their chemical brethren could or would be turned to any practical purpose, or that it possessed any physiological or therapeutic effects upon the animal economy. I mention this to show that the *cui bono* argument against philosophical investigations,

on the ground that there may be at first no apparent practical benefit to be derived from them, has been amply refuted in this, as it has been in many other instances. For I feel assured that the use of chloroform will soon entirely supersede the use of ether; and from the facility and rapidity of its exhibition, it will be employed as an anæsthetic agent in many cases, and under many circumstances, in which ether would never have been had recourse to. Here, then, we have a substance which, in the first instance, was merely interesting as a matter of scientific curiosity and research, becoming rapidly an object of intense importance, as an agent by which human suffering and agony may be annulled and abolished under some of the most trying circumstances in which human nature is ever placed.'

OMNIBUS SKETCHES.

BEING only what the denizens of London call, for reasons best known to themselves, 'a country cousin,' I cannot presume to give any sketch of matters connected with the numerous omnibuses that roll, with noise enough, through the great realm of Cockaigne. My experience of London 'buses,' though extensive, is full of sameness and monotony; for when in that delectable city, unfettered for the time by the cares or the hours of business, my practice is, when tired with walking, to hail the first 'bus' that comes in sight, and ride, as an outside passenger, until the terminus is reached. In this way I have made myself familiar with the characteristic features of the leading London thoroughfares, and have enjoyed many a delightful journey of discovery, until I was safely 'set down' at the Elephant and Castle, the Bank, Sloane Street, Mile End, or some other of the pleasant terminuses with which the outskirts of London abound. I can honestly assure all 'country cousins' that the most pleasant way of viewing the streets of London is from the top of an omnibus, travelling you know not whither. A certain admiral was in the habit of riding through London streets at an early hour in the morning, when very few people were out of their beds, for the purpose of getting better views of the public buildings, and the geography of the city, than were attainable during the day; but whose would wish to see to the best advantage buildings, streets, and citizens together, should view them in the manner just described.

It is the boast of Englishmen, that though Paris is France, London is not England. True, indeed, London is great; but so also are Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds. London has its hosts of omnibuses; but we too, 'country cousins' though we are, can ride in our 'buses' for sixpence all the way, 'as well as the citizens of the great Babylon.' And as metropolitan wit is the fittest for sketching metropolitan things, so a 'country cousin' may use what scanty modicum of wit he has in sketching country 'buses.'

London is like an ellipse—it has two centres: provincial towns are like circles—they have only one centre from which all their 'buses' start. This centre, in the town we have in our eye, is the Great Exchange, from whence radiate to every point of the compass great thoroughfares, traversed every half hour by omnibuses. You wish in the afternoon to visit a pleasant village two or three miles distant, and you walk down a crowded street to meet the 'bus' that will convey you thither. But you have forgotten that it is near the time when business closes and merchants dine; and when the vehicle comes slowly up, and you hail the driver by elevating your arm, stick, or umbrella, a shake of the head, or a gruff exclamation of 'full,' compels you to choose whether you shall walk, or go and secure a seat in the next 'bus.' You choose the latter alternative, and arrive at the Exchange a quarter of an hour before the time of starting. The 'bus' is there, horses yoked,

and driver and boy in waiting. You are almost ashamed to waste so much time in sitting idly in the vehicle; nevertheless, you enter, and find several passengers there already, so that you have some consolation in having companions in idleness. Opposite to you, in the most comfortable seat, is a remarkable elderly gentleman, a beautiful specimen of a British trader, whose character was formed long before the days of railway or telegraphic speed. You will find him in the same 'bus' every day at the same hour. He is punctual in everything; and though he values time highly, he will rather lose half an hour than lose his seat. His dress is really substantial, and at the same time neat, and without a single speck of dust. You will never see him without that clean silk umbrella, be the weather fair or foul. His linen is spotlessly white, and his face wears no trace of a beard. He is, in short,

'An honest man close-buttoned to the chin,
Broad cloth without, and a warm heart within.'

Another passenger is perhaps a lady, who has come to town to make a few purchases, and is now returning home. In one corner you will see a young man with a pale face and spectacles. A few books on his knee give him a student look; but you find the books are novels, and that their possessor is a bank clerk in delicate health, who lives in country lodgings. The door opens, and another merchant enters: a younger man than your first acquaintance, and at the same time stouter, less neatly dressed, and more jolly-looking. He commences talking immediately; he cracks his jokes, and laughs loudly at them; converses freely with his brother merchant on the state of business, and the talk on 'Change; and goes on making many acute sensible remarks in the most off-hand business way, and putting everybody but the novel-reading clerk into good-humour. The door opens, and enters another merchant like the former, and joins in the talk. Then comes a servant-girl, who has been on some particular mission, and is now, in her best clothes, quite proud of riding home in the 'bus.' She comes in in a great hurry, and shouts to the attending imp of a boy the name of the place where she wishes to be 'let off,' and strictly enjoins him not to forget. The next passenger is a sharp vivacious man, with a quick eye and thin lips. That is a lawyer, and with his usual acuteness in scenting out infractions of the law, he exclaims, as he sits down, 'Surely somebody has been smoking here?' Of course nobody has; but everybody immediately perceives the smell, and tries to find out where it comes from. Your second merchant friend soon discovers the secret, and laughingly directs attention to the glass pane in the front of the vehicle, through which you can see several young gents—cash-keepers, and book-keepers, and corresponding clerks—sitting outside smoking mild Havanas, or Manilla cheroots, a portion of whose smoke has made its way inside. Then enters a physician, about to visit a country patient, and he knows every passenger, and has something to say to each. The 'bus' begins to fill, and the quarter of an hour is nearly expired. Just as the driver is about to mount the box, another merchant passenger enters. This is a specimen of the new school. He is a young man, rather a dandy in his dress, with a jaunty air, a profusion of whisker, and a quick, roving eye that never rests. He is 'a fast man,' a speculator in shares: he thinks himself very clever and knowing, and will talk with a very fair share of sound sense so long as you talk only of 'cash.' But when his neighbours, the old merchants, talk with easy familiarity about higher topics, our fast friend is dumb, and plays with his gold watch-guard, or looks through his eyeglass at the servant-girl, who sits with wondrous ears listening to talk which she cannot comprehend. But the lawyer and the physician can talk, and sensibly too, about everything; while the bank clerk sits deeply absorbed in the pages of his novel.

Tempus fugit, and the omnibus starts. It has not proceeded far, when there is a stop. An elderly lady,

very stout, and bearing several brown paper parcels, wants to get in. There is just room for another 'inside;' and the vacant seat is, as vacant omnibus seats always are, at the extreme end of the vehicle. The door opens, and the lady enters. As soon as she is clear of the door, the boy closes it with a bang, and shouts 'All right!'—the little rogue well knowing that all is wrong. The lady has to push her way on to her seat; the sudden starting of the 'bus' sends her plump down on the jolly merchant's knee, who, with a passing joke, pushes her gently to his next neighbour; and after great exertion, the stout lady settles in her seat, out of breath, and wiping the perspiration from her brow, as she half audibly mutters something about 'them bothering 'buses.' The inside is now full, and the 'bus' rolls with great noise over the rough pavement. A stoppage now and then occurs to let out and in a passenger. The talk is kept up at intervals: sometimes the fun is 'fast and furious;' at others 'silence reigns supreme.' And so wheels onward the vehicle, with its strange and varied freight of human beings, many of them brought together for the first and the last time in this world. Passengers gradually get out; and by the time the terminus is reached, all your companions are perhaps gone: the merchants to spend the evening in their own happy homes; the bank clerk to luxuriate over his novel; the physician to attend the sick-bed of his patient; and the 'smoking outsiders' to enjoy their 'dinner, and drink, and one cheer more.'

At every hour of the day the omnibus has its different set of passengers. Return by it from the country in the evening, and you find it occupied principally by tradesmen or their foremen, who have been inspecting their workpeople at some country job; strangers returning from a saunter round the town, or townspeople returning from visits to their country friends. On Saturdays you will meet ladies going to market to buy, and country people going to sell; and occasionally some washerwomen, accompanied by large baskets of clean linen, washed and dried, and made up in the sweet fresh air of the country—a perfect luxury to the denizens of the smoky, sooty, cloud-covered town.

To the rider in omnibuses, every passenger is a study suggestive of many thoughts. That noble German writer, Richter, once finely said that 'either the future or the past is written in every face, and makes us, if not melancholy, at least mild and gentle.' And when, sitting in your own corner of the 'bus,' without inclination to join in the talk, and unable to think of more serious things, you quietly examine every countenance, there will arise in the mind certain vague and dreamy conceptions, out of which you feel assured that you could weave the story of every passenger's life. But these thoughts are very evanescent: they usually depart along with the passenger who gave rise to them; and as soon as you hear the sound of your own voice again, they all, like visions of the night, fly away.

But a deeper study is presented to your notice in the 'omnibus boy.' Each vehicle has a driver and a boy: the former comes very little into contact with the passengers, except the outsiders, with whom he talks about the last Derby and St Leger, and the merits of his own cattle; but 'the boy' has to enter into certain relations with each passenger, in consequence of his duty of obtaining the fare, and stopping the 'bus' when the passenger requires to get out. The boys on this line of road are six in number. They are all about the same age; that is, from fourteen to sixteen, a period in life when a great change takes place, and the tricks of the boy partake somewhat of the dignity of the man. To a looker-on, these boys would appear to lead an unpleasant life; but they seem to enjoy it. They are full of life and activity; they never whine or complain. Their hours of duty are long—too long: never less than from eight o'clock in the morning till nine o'clock at night all the week through, and on Sundays till even a later hour occasionally; the only break in the whole week being a few hours during divine service. They

are not, however, closely occupied all this time, and their work is in a great measure a recreation. They learn a great deal regarding the ways of the world, and become most acute in their habits of thought and action; but they learn no trade. Arrived at a certain age, they cannot be retained; you may find many 'post-boys' verging on threescore and upwards, but every omnibus boy is in deed and in truth a boy. He has plenty of spare time, which he spends near the Exchange in gossip with his equals, in lording it over younger boys, in annoying his elders, or listening gravely to the sage discourse of cabmen and porters. When at the country terminus, he will be seen lounging about the stables, prying occasionally into the bar of the inn, or romping on the road and in the grass with some of his estimable country friends, among whom he is petted as much for his superior acuteness, as for the occasional 'lifts' that he has the power of giving his juvenile friends when they go to town. On his journey he must be ready at the call of every one, to stop the 'bus' when required, or to deliver messages and parcels at poultry and other shops, which throw him far behind the vehicle, and cause him to run at furious speed to overtake it, and regain his old seat at the back-door. On that seat he oftener stands than sits; and when he is not 'poking fun' from it at juveniles in the street, he is either dancing a miniature polka, whistling the same tune, or singing 'Happy land.'

Each boy is different from another. There is Bill, for example, the oldest, most forward, and tyrannical of the six. He is the conductor of the largest 'bus,' one that holds fifteen inside and nine out. The others usually hold only thirteen inside; and often when that number are seated in Bill's 'bus,' he will be informed by some ease-loving passenger that now it is full, to which Bill's answer is, 'No, it isn't; hold two more yet;' and when his statement is called in question, he triumphantly answers, 'This is a fifteen 'bus,' which settles all further dispute. Bill enjoys these triumphs, and he has many of them over merchants, lawyers, and elderly ladies. Again, he is a musician, and keeps a French horn, on which he attempts occasional overtures and voluntaries; and on being asked the name of the tune played, he will answer you with abrupt conciseness, 'Mary Blane, to be sure!' Bill is the most 'wide-awake' of all the boys. He looks most sharply after the fares, and his memory is wonderful. Tell him when you get in where you want to be put down, and he stops the 'bus' exactly at the place, though he may have to remember the instructions of half-a-dozen other passengers besides yourself. He has many friends on the road who stand in awe of him. He will entice little boys to ride for a few minutes on the steps of the 'bus,' and suddenly seize their caps and drop them on the road, thus most effectually getting rid of the urchins. He makes faces to navigators as he passes, and winks to many a servant-girl, who peeps out to see the passing vehicle. Bill also is ambitious. He will occasionally disappear from his station at the door; and you will see, on looking out at the side-windows on the shady side of the road, the shadow of Bill plying the whip, and handling the ribbons, which the good-natured coachman has given up to him for a time.

Again, there is Jack, a little thin-visaged restless boy, who is always poking his head in at the door to count the passengers, and to ask—'Next place to stop at please?' Jack is never still; he is up and down from the steps to his perch, and from his perch to the roof over and over again. But he is always within hail, and his little head comes poking in at the door as his shrill voice squeaks out his inquiry, until he is declared by the ladies to be a 'tiresome boy.' On Sundays Jack is quite a little man; with a top-coat and a black beaver, and a clean shirt, all carefully prepared by his poor widowed mother at home, whom you will occasionally see waiting at the corner of a lane to hand him his dinner as he passes. Again, there is Bob, a very quiet boy, who plays upon a cracked flute, and who seldom moves except when

he is obliged. Bob and his driver do not agree, for Bob loves his flute rather too much, and forgets the driver's instructions occasionally, of which he is sometimes sharply reminded by a cut of the whip. Again, there is Jim the singer, whom you will often see with strange ballads in his hand, which he is learning by heart, and of which he will occasionally come out with a few stanzas, to the admiration of the audience of three boys whom he has collected on the 'bus' steps. Then there is Tom, the most stupid boy of the whole lot; a careless, trifling little fellow, whose head is often punched by walking-sticks and umbrellas, and who gets more hard words, on account of his neglect of orders, than all the other boys put together. Lastly, there is George, the melancholy boy, who is the most careful and attentive of all; the boy who seems prematurely grave, and whose quiet, thoughtful countenance makes you regret that he is not better employed.

And so, from day to day, all the year through, in wet weather and in dry, these omnibuses roll on with their boyish conductors; all forming a portion of the great scheme of world guidance, and each boy doing his indispensable share of the work allotted to man here below.

ESCAPES.

In these piping times of peace, one is startled to hear the sound of 'the ear-piercing fife.' But on listening, we find it to be but a very little fife—not much more formidable than a whistle; and its notes come mellowed to the ear as if from afar off, and were it not for their warlike associations, would mingle without much notice with the ordinary music of the time. This allegorical fife is 'The British Army at Washington and New Orleans,' a small volume, whose purpose it is to relate modestly, not to say meekly, to the present peaceful generation, the details of battles which passed into history thirty years ago.* Its theme is the brief and inglorious campaign of the British army in America in the years 1814-15; and the author, in the midst of his details of blood and burning, canvasses earnestly, and no doubt judiciously, the mistakes of departed generals, and of double or treble ex-ministries. This author, however, is Mr Gleig, a well-known and equable writer; and even the sweepings and refuse of his memory, though certainly in the present instance not imperatively called for, will be welcomed by many of his old readers, since they come at all.

Throughout the volume there are various scenic sketches given in good style; but the narrative, with the exception of a few passages here and there, is dull and quiet, as if feeling that it belongs to a bygone generation, or at least to the youth of the present, when the echoes of war were yet in the ear of Europe. Mr Gleig further identifies himself with the past, by the sort of defence of negro slavery familiar to the wisdom of our ancestors. It is a grievous evil, no doubt, in the abstract—but it is of long standing—authorised in the Bible, &c. &c.; and he proceeds to argue gravely about the expediency of our doing, or letting alone—what has been done long ago.

Among the anecdotes of war, there are none which exercise a more lively influence over the sympathies of the reader than narratives of personal escapes; and Mr Gleig, as a practised military writer, makes use of course of this source of interest. His story, for instance, of Admiral Cockburn, given in a few lines, is capital, and we hope new. 'It is said,' says he, 'that when Admiral Cockburn, who accompanied the army, and attended General Ross with the fidelity of an aid-de-camp, was in the wood where the latter fell, he observed an American rifleman taking deliberate aim at him from behind a tree. Instead of turning aside, or discharging a pistol at the fellow, as any other man would have done, the brave admiral, doubling his fist,

* Murray's Home and Colonial Library, No. 51.

shook it at his enemy, and cried aloud, "Oh, you—Yankee, I'll give it you!" upon which the man dropped his musket in the greatest alarm, and took to his heels. This resembles another story we remember of the effect of habitual authoritativeness. A gentleman, for many years an invalid, and always apprehensive of cold, had acquired an inveterate habit of crying out 'Shut the door!' One day his carriage was stopped by a highwayman, who, after robbing him of his watch and money, was about to withdraw, when the victim cried out as usual, 'Shut the door!' The startled robber obeyed, and then made off.

Another very gallant escape is related at more length. 'Having waited till it was considered imprudent to wait longer, without knowing whether he was to be supported, Colonel Brook determined, if possible, to open a communication with the fleet. That the river could not be far off, we knew; but how to get to it without falling in with wandering parties of the enemy, was the difficulty. The thing, however, must be done; and as secrecy, and not force, was the main object, it was resolved to despatch for the purpose a single officer without an escort. On this service a particular friend of mine chanced to be employed. Mounting his horse, he proceeded to the right of the army, where, having delayed a few minutes till the moon rising gave light enough through the clouds to distinguish objects, he pushed forward at a venture, in as straight a line as he could guess at. It was not long before his progress was stopped by a high hedge. Like knight-errants of old, he then gave himself up to the guidance of his horse, which, taking him towards the rear, soon brought him into a narrow lane, that appeared to wind in the direction of the enemy's fort. This lane he determined to follow; and holding a cocked pistol in his hand, pushed on, not perhaps entirely comfortable, but desirous at all hazards of executing his commission. He had not ridden far when the sound of voices through the splashing of the rain arrested his attention. Pulling up, he listened in silence, and soon discovered that they came from two American soldiers, whether stragglers or sentinels it was impossible to divine; but whoever they were, they seemed to be approaching. It now struck him that his safest course would be to commence the attack; and having therefore waited till he saw them stop short, as if they had perceived him, he rode forward, and called out to them to surrender. The fellows turned and fled; but galloping after them, he overtook one, at whose head he presented a pistol, and who instantly threw down his rifle, and yielded himself prisoner; whilst the other, dashing into a thicket, escaped, probably to tell that he had been attacked by a whole regiment of British cavalry. Having thus taken a prisoner, my friend resolved to make him of some use; with this view, he commanded him to lay hold of his thigh, and to guide him directly to the river, threatening, if he attempted to mislead or betray him into the hands of the Americans, that he would instantly blow out his brains. Finding himself completely in my friend's power, the fellow could not refuse to obey; and accordingly, the man resting his hand upon the left thigh of the officer, they proceeded along the lane for some time, till they came to a part where it branched off in two directions. My friend here stopped for a moment, and again repeated his threat, swearing that the instant his conduct became suspicious should be the last of his life. The soldier assured him that he would keep his word, and moreover informed him that some of our ships were almost within gun-shot of the fort—a piece of information which was quickly confirmed by the sound of firing, and the appearance of shells in the air. They now struck to the right, and in half an hour gained the brink of the river; where my friend found a party just landed from the squadron, and preparing to seek their way towards the camp. By them he was conducted to the admiral, from whom he learnt that no effectual support could be given to the land force; for such was the shallowness of the river, that none except

the very lightest craft could make their way within six miles of the town; and even these were stopped by vessels sunk in the channel, and other artificial bars, barely within a shell's longest range of the fort. With this unwelcome news he was accordingly forced to return; and taking his unwilling guide along with him, he made his way, without any adventure, to our advanced posts, where, having thanked the fellow for his fidelity, he rewarded it more effectually by setting him at liberty.'

A third hair-breadth 'escape, and we have done. 'Whilst things were in this state, whilst the banks of the rivers continued in our possession, and the interior was left unmolested to the Americans, a rash confidence sprang up in the minds of all, inasmuch that parties of pleasure would frequently land without arms, and spend many hours on shore. On one of these occasions, several officers from the 85th regiment agreed to pass a day together at a farmhouse about a quarter of a mile from the stream; and taking with them ten soldiers, unarmed, to row the boat, a few sailors, and a young midshipman, not more than twelve years of age, they proceeded to put their determination into practice. Leaving the men, under the command of their youthful pilot, to take care of the boat, the officers went on to the house; but they had not remained there above an hour, when they were alarmed by a shout, which sounded as if it came from the river. Looking out, they beheld their party surrounded by seventy or eighty mounted riflemen; the boat dragged upon the beach, and set on fire. Giving themselves up for lost, they continued for an instant in a sort of stupor; but the master of the house, to whom some kindness had been shown by our people, proved himself grateful, and letting them out by a back-door, directed them to hide themselves in the wood, whilst he should endeavour to turn their pursuers on a wrong scent. As they had nothing to trust to except the honour of this American, it cannot be supposed that they felt much at ease; but, seeing no better course before them, they resigned themselves to his guidance, and plunging into the thicket, concealed themselves as well as they could among the underwood. In the meantime the American soldiers, having secured all that were left behind, except the young midshipman, who fled into the wood in spite of their fire, divided into two bodies, one of which approached the house, whilst the other endeavoured to overtake the brave boy. It so chanced that the party in pursuit passed close to the officers in concealment, but by the greatest good fortune failed to observe them. They succeeded, however, in catching a glimpse of the midshipman, just as he had gained the water's edge, and was pushing off a light canoe which he had loosened from the stump of a tree. The barbarians immediately gave chase, firing at the brave lad, and calling out to surrender; but the gallant youth paid no attention either to their voices or their bullets. Launching his little bark, he put to sea with a single paddle, and regardless of the showers of balls which fell about him, returned alone and unhurt to the ship.'

THE GAME AT DEFINITIONS.

FOUR friends were accustomed to meet. They resorted to *bouts rimés*, in order to while away an idle hour, but did not find the amusement they expected. They then tried a new exercise for their wits. A word being appointed, each set himself to give a definition of it; and, when done, all the four were brought together. Thus were formed the materials of a very small book, called 'The Council of Four,'* which has just made its appearance. It contains exactly a hundred subjects—as Language, Mirror, Death, Paper, Luxury, Politics, &c. There is an interest in seeing how four clever men are to make out something pointed on each of these themes

* The Council of Four; a Game at Definitions. Edited by Arthur Wallbridge, author of 'Torrington Hall,' &c. London: Olivier. 1848.

in a single sentence, and often the definition given is one of no inconsiderable force. As an example of one subject—

CHILD.

The ever-renewed hope of the world.
A conscript for the wars.
The future in the present.
God's problem waiting man's solution.

Of single definitions, some have a pungency which throws the rest of their several groups much into shade, as—

IGNORANCE—A dark place, where poor people are allowed to grope about till they hurt themselves or somebody else.

FAMILY—An item in a poor nation's wealth and a rich nation's poverty.

IRON—The bones of the giant Civilisation.

EXPERIENCE—The scars of our wounds.

DEBT—A slice out of another man's loaf.

Others are too much of the character of conceits or rebuses, though these are fewer in proportion than might be expected from the present strain of light literature in the metropolis. Our object, however, is less to criticise this clever little work than to introduce it as a *vade-mecum* for a very rational, and, as far as we know, novel plan of fireside amusement, which may be followed with pleasure and advantage by our readers, especially those of tender age. The definition assignable to Wallbridge's 'Game at Definitions' is—

The Hoyle of its subject.

THE MANCHESTER ATHENÆUM SOIRÉE— MR COBDEN'S SPEECH.

ALTHOUGH we have no room for a report of this meeting, even if it were our province to give one, there are various points in Mr Cobden's speech which we are anxious to garner up for the quiet perusal and home meditation of our readers. It was his first appearance in public since his return from abroad, and he very naturally launched upon the subject of his foreign travels, expatiating upon the proof exhibited by his cordial reception, of the fact, that 'we are enlarging the circle of our sympathies; that the sphere in which politics is working has widened in our day; that instead of viewing each other in the narrow, jealous spirit which formerly distinguished the different nations of Europe, we are prepared to take a wider and more generous view of the interests of ourselves and neighbours; and that we are approaching that time when we shall think our interests identical.' He found the Oriental type at the two opposite extremities of Europe—in the remains of the Moors in Andalusia, and of the Tartars at Moscow; but even there, and in all intermediate places, he was constantly struck with the moral identity of men, and made to wonder what it could possibly be which stirred up nations and races against each other. The whole thing was a blunder, and nothing else. We had misunderstood each other, like the characters in a comedy, who, at the *dénouement*, find out that it was altogether a mistake. But this comedy was a sad tragedy sometimes; and if we could only find the means by which we could show to the different nations of Europe that their interests are identical, that their objects are the same, we should be conferring the greatest blessing upon humanity that has ever been devised since the creation of the world.

In Italy, Mr Cobden went on to say, he had found a new life springing up. 'And when I inquired how it was that Italy began to make itself heard and felt in the rest of Europe, I came to the conclusion, from all I could observe, that it arose from the quiet progress of thought and of intelligence arising out of the education of the people. There have been in Italy great efforts made for the education of the people. I found, to my astonishment, in almost every town, several Infant Schools, supported by voluntary contributions, superintended by Italian nobles; and I saw a school at Turin,

which a marquis attends daily, and rides upon a hobby-horse with the children, and joins with them in their play. It is an honour to him, and I will mention his name; for I am sure he would not be ashamed to be known to you all: his name is Dazalio, and he is the brother of that Dazalio whose writings you have lately seen upon the present state of Italy. Then you have in Italy now, as you have always had, leading minds, great and powerful individualities, in every town; men who have been engaged in writing and treating upon every question of social importance. You have in every town in Italy men who are not only taking a deep interest in schools, but in prison discipline, and in every question relating to the moral condition of the people. As regards political economy, I was amazed at the number of people I found in Italy who sympathised with our practical efforts and controversies upon the subject of political economy. Every lawyer, every councillor in Italy, studies political economy as part of his education; and hence arises the great interest that was taken upon that subject, upon which we have been so long and so arduously engaged in England. It has not been from violent outbreaks in Italy that the present state of things is coming round. Violence and revolution retarded the present progress; but I trace to institutions kindred to this, though not the same as this—I trace to those institutions all the progress that has been made in Italy; and I join with the worthy chairman in saying, that it is by the progress of the human mind alone that governments can make progress, or that good governments can be maintained at all. I join with him in saying, that at this time public opinion will control governments. I go further, and I say, from my experience in Europe, that there is no such thing as despotism existing, in the old sense of the word: public opinion rules more or less everywhere, the better, of course, in proportion as it is the wiser; but give me the compound ratio of the intelligence and the morality of any people, and I will give you the character of their government, no matter what its formation. If you ask me, after my long tour on the continent, what it is that recurs to my memory with the greatest pleasure, I am bound to say it is Italy and the Italians. It is not merely their monumental remains: it is not merely that we have there the proofs that they have twice given civilisation to Europe and to mankind; but it is the character of the minds of their most distinguished men of this day. I like intercourse with living minds, and I will pass by the aqueducts, the columns, and the ruins, and I say that, amongst the Italians, at the present time, you will find, not in the mass of the people—I would not pretend to say so—but you will find in the Italians some of the most amiable, accomplished, and interesting men that are to be found in Europe; and it is those men, and the intercourse I had with them whilst in Italy, which, to tell you frankly, comes back upon my memory with greater pleasure than anything I experienced abroad. I argue that, in the present effort which is being made in Italy, you will see it progress just as the people become more and more enlightened. You have there, as you always had, a first-rate quality in the race; and if they are but left to themselves, if they have that privilege which we claim for ourselves, if Italians are left to work out their own regeneration, I do not doubt that the people who have twice given civilisation to the world, have the power within themselves again to work out their own redemption.'

It may be proper to keep strictly in view that Mr Cobden chiefly saw men of rank and education in Italy, and that his remarks apply strictly to that class. A friend of his and ours, who has been much in Italy, deplors that the mass of the people are of very different character. How far Mr Cobden may have overlooked the state of the masses in forming the agreeable prospects here presented to view, we are unable to say; but we feel only too sure that, till the bulk of the people are improved, all efforts at political regeneration must be greatly liable to disappointment.

On the subject of languages, Mr Cobden seems to be

of the opinion which all men who have travelled must entertain—that French is the leading language of communication in Europe. To learn French, he said, was indispensable, more especially since ‘we are coming to a time when it will be not merely the select few who will travel to the continent, but when the operatives of this part of the world shall go in cheap trains to Paris. Within twelve months of this time, the railway communication from Boulogne to Paris will be completed, and we shall go regularly from the capital of England to the capital of France in ten hours. There will be opened up by that means a most desirable intercourse; and we shall see the different people of the world married, instead of these marriages of princes that create such a noise and tumult among the public.

‘Gentlemen,’ concluded Mr Cobden, ‘I exhort you to maintain this and kindred institutions on every ground, public and private. I have had many changes, and have seen many phases of society, probably as many as most people. I do not speak egotistically, because I am now merely going to elucidate a thought. I have seen many phases of society; I have had many exciting and gratifying scenes; yet I tell you honestly and conscientiously, that if I want to look back to that which has given me the purest satisfaction of mind, it is in those pursuits which are accessible to every member of the Athenæum. I have not found the greatest enjoyment in the exciting plaudits of a public meeting; I have not found the greatest pleasure or interest in intercourse sometimes with men of an elevated sphere abroad, whom others might probably think it was a pleasure to meet; but I come back to you conscientiously to declare, that the purest pleasures I have known are those accessible to all—those that exist in the calm intercourse with intelligent minds, and the communion with the departed great, through books, by our own fireside.*

THE GIN-PALACE.

THE gin-palace is generally at the corner of two intersecting streets in a gin-drinking neighbourhood: it towers, in all the majesty of stucco pilasters, in genuine Cockney splendour, over the dingy mansions that support it, like a rapacious tyrant over his impoverished subjects.

The doors are large, swinging easily upon patent hinges, and ever half-and-half—half-open, half-shut, so that the most undecided touch of the dram-drinker admits him. The windows are of plate-glass, set in brass sashes, and are filled with flaming announcements in large letters—‘The Cheapest House in London!’—‘Cream of the Valley!’—‘Creaming Stout!’—‘Brilliant Ales!’—‘Old Tom, fourpence a quart!’—‘Hodge’s Best for mixing!’—and a variety of other entertainments for the men and beasts who make the gin-palace their home. At night, splendid lights irradiate the surrounding gloom, and an illuminated clock serves to remind the toper of the time he throws away in throwing away his reason.

Within, the splendour is in keeping with the splendour without—counters fitted with zinc, and a long array of brass taps; fittings of the finest Spanish mahogany, beautifully polished; bottles, containing cordials, and other drugs, gilded and labelled, as in the apothecaries’ shops. At one side is the bar-parlour, an apartment fitted up with congenial taste, and usually occupied by the family of the publican; in the distance are *visitas*, and sometimes galleries, formed altogether of huge vats of the various sorts of liquor dispensed in the establishment. Behind the counter, which is usually raised to a level with the breasts of the toppers, stand men in their shirt-sleeves, well-dressed females, or both, dispensers of the ‘short’ and ‘heavy’; the under-sized tipplers, raising themselves on tiptoe, deposit the three-halfpence for the ‘drop’ of gin, or whatever else they require, and receive their *quantum* of the poison in return; ragged women, with starving children, match and ballad-vendors, fill up the foreground of the picture. There are no seats, nor any accommodation for the customers, in the regular gin-palace; every exertion is used to make the

place as uncomfortable to the consumers as possible, so that they shall only step in to drink, and pay; step out, and return to drink and pay again. No food of any kind is provided at the gin-palace, save a few biscuits, which are exhibited in a wire-cage for protection against the furtive hand; drink, *eternal*, poisonous drink, is the sole provision of this whitened sepulchre.

There is not in all London a more melancholy and spirit-depressing sight than the area of one of the larger gin-palaces on a wet night. There the homeless, houseless miseries of both sexes, whether they have money or not, resort in numbers for a temporary shelter; aged women selling ballads and matches, cripples, little beggar-boys and girls, slaving idiots, plemen, sandwich-men, apple and orange women, shell-fishmongers, huddled pell-mell, in drizzle-tailed confusion. Never can human nature, one would imagine, take a more abject posture than is exhibited here; there is a character, an individuality, a family likeness common to the whole race of sots: the pale, clayey, flaccid, clammy face, pinched in every feature—the weeping, ferret-like, lack-lustre eye, the unkempt hair, the slattern shawl, the untidy dress, the slip-shod gait, too well betray the confirmed drunkard.

The noises, too, of the assembled toppers are hideous; appalling even when heard in an atmosphere of gin. Imprecations, execrations, oburgations, applications, until at length the patience of the publican, and the last copper of his customers, are exhausted, when, rushing from behind his counter, assisted by his shopmen, he expels, *vi et armis*, the dilatory mob, dragging out by the heels or collars the dead drunkards, to nestle, as best they may, outside the un hospitable door.

Here, unobserved, you contemplate the infinite varieties of men self-metamorphosed into beasts; soaker, tippler, toper, muddler, dram-drinker, beer-swiller, cordial-tippler, sot.

Here you may behold the barefoot child, hungry, naked, clay-faced, handing up on tiptoe that infernal bottle, which made it, and keeps it what it is, and with which, when filled, it creeps home to its brutal father, or infamous mother, the messenger of its own misery.

Here the steady respectable sot, the good customer, slides in, and flings down his throat the frequent dram; then, with an emphatic ‘ha’ of gratification, drops his money, nods to his friend the landlord, and for a short interval disappears.

Here you may behold a row of miseries seated by the wall, whose voices are husky, while they implore you to treat them with a glass of ale, or supplicate for the coppers they see you receive in change from the barman; and who are only permitted that wretched place of rest that they may beg for the benefit of the publican, and for his profit poison themselves with the alms of others.—*Physiology of London Life.*

[We take this opportunity, as the only one readily available, of commending to universal reception and regard the series of sketches which George Cruikshank has brought out under the title OF THE BOTTLE. As a mirror for showing this vice its own image, it seems to us unrivalled. We believe we must only be expressing a general feeling, when we say that we have always delighted in the clever comic sketches of this artist, and allowed him the great praise due to them, but that we never felt one half the esteem or respect for him which we feel now that he has given the productions of his pencil the respectability of a moral and philanthropic aim.]

EFFECTS ON KNOWLEDGE OF ITS DIFFUSION.

It is highly significant, both of future results and of present duty, that in our stage of social culture, knowledge can only advance by being diffused. That which some writers carp at as a flaw and a foible in our modern state, may be boldly claimed as one great point of superiority. We are a mechanical age, it is said; everything is done by combination and organisation. We need philosophical and literary societies, royal institutions, British associations, academics, colleges, universities, in order that knowledge may flourish. How different from the sage of antiquity, who, by solitary musings, courted truth; who found a higher inspiration in the depth of the wilderness, where his meditations fructified into power that moved heaven and earth! Such statements are adapted to delude the religious heart,

* We are indebted to the ‘Manchester Examiner’ for the materials of the above abridgment.

which knows, and will ever know, the value of lonely musings. Nevertheless, the facts are herein utterly misrepresented. Isolated man is very weak, in intellect as in body. It is the play of mind upon mind which originally develops every faculty in the infant and in the growing boy; and only by joint effort, by mutual enlightenment, by learning from predecessors, by alternate inspection, by each verifying what another has suggested, can we make sure and sound advances.—*Professor Newman's Lecture on the Relations of Free Knowledge to Moral Sentiment.*

TESTS.

However some good men may cheat their own understanding, it is certain that a readiness to sign articles is no test of moral or spiritual sentiment; and is utterly ridiculous as a guarantee for any sort of goodness, present or future. The system is not even venerable for its antiquity, but is an inheritance transmitted from times when each man was eager to use the power of the state in enforcing his private opinions, and when church property was a scramble for selfishness. Nor can any arguments for continuing such exclusiveness be devised which do not amount to this—that young men's minds must be *managed* so as to push certain opinions upon them which, without peculiar external appliances, could not recommend and support themselves; and that knowledge (as far as possible) is to be confined to a special class, who are (as long as possible) bound over to maintain a fixed code of doctrine. I will not insist that this is glaringly absurd in a system which does not profess infallibility. What may here more especially be noted is, that an exclusive corporation is thus generated, having peculiar interests of its own. . . . Every restrictive trade is liable to a moral disease of its own. There have been kingcraft and priestcraft, lawycraft, doctorcraft, and many other crafts beside, each virulent in proportion to the completeness of the mystery and of the monopoly. But break down the walls of exclusiveness; let the wind of heaven play through the dark chambers of pretension; pour the natural light into the desks and drawers of official technicality; and a healthier, sweeter breath soon comes forth from professional halls, when scholastic and traditionary lore is forced to endure the gaze of strong native intelligence. All this is notorious. Are we very unreasonable then, if we go so far as to think that an ecclesiastical corporation is liable to the same defects as all similar bodies? For myself, I must confess, that wherever there is artificial appropriation, I am irresistibly impelled to suspect something amiss; while the great manifesto of simple-minded purpose is seen in the hearty desire of diffusing knowledge as unshackled by conditions as the natural light of heaven.—*Ibid.*—[Tests seem to us a perfectly fair means, as far as they are a means, by which a private body may prevent the admission of members of sentiments discordant with those hitherto entertained in the body. In this respect they are nothing more than a certificate of a certain kind of fitness. In as far, however, as they seek to exclude particular classes of individuals from benefits which flow essentially from the nation at large, or which could not exist without the national sanction, they obviously appear liable to such a strong challenge of reason and justice, as nothing in our age can long resist. All such exclusive arrangements have their dooms written on their foreheads; while the date of execution depends solely on some external accident which may any day take place.]

FEMALE EDUCATION.

The system of female education, as it now stands, aims only at embellishing a few years of life, which are in themselves so full of pleasure and happiness that they hardly need it, and then leaves the rest of existence a miserable prey to vacancy and idle insignificance. The real object of education is to give children resources that will endure as long as life endures, habits that time will ameliorate, not destroy, occupations that will render sickness tolerable, solitude pleasant, age venerable, life more dignified and useful, and death less terrible.—*Rev. Sidney Smith.*

NEVER GIVE UP.

What if you fail in business? You still have life and health. Don't sit down and cry about mishaps, for that will never get you out of debt, nor buy you children frocks. Go to work at something, eat sparingly, dress moderately, drink nothing exciting, and, above all, keep a merry heart, and you'll be up in the world.—*Franklin.*

OUR AIN FOLK.

I wish we were hame to our ain folk,
Our kind and our true-hearted ain folk,
Where the gentle are leal, and the semple are weal,
And the hames are the hames o' our ain folk.
We've met wi' the gay and the guid where we've come,
We're courtly wi' mony, and couthy wi' some,
But something's still wanting we never can find,
Sin' the day that we left our auld neighbors behind.

Oh I wish we were hame to our ain folk,
Our kind and our true-hearted ain folk,
Where daftin and glee, wi' the friendly and free,
Made our hearts aye se fond o' our ain folk.
Some tauld us in gowpna we'd gather the gear,
Sae soon as we can't to the rich mailans here,
But what is in mailans, and what is in mirth,
If 'tis not enjoyed in the glen o' our birth? * * *

Then I wish we were hame to our ain folk,
Our kind and our true-hearted ain folk,
Where the wild thistles wave o'er the beds o' the brave,
And the graves are the graves o' our ain folk.
But happy gae lucky, we'll trudge on our way,
Till the arm waxes weak, and the haffet grows gray,
And though in this world our ain still we miss,
We'll meet them at last in a world o' bliss,
And then we'll be hame to our ain folk,
Our kind and our true-hearted ain folk,
Where far 'yond the moon, in the heavens aboon,
The hames are the hames o' our ain folk.

—*Riddell's Poems.*

IMPERISHABLE FEATURES OF THE JEWS.

If a man like Newton or Locke were to cast his eye upon a Jewish face, and immediately after read the following passage in a book written some thousands of years ago (Isaiah, lxi. 9), 'And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall recognise them, for they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed,' it is impossible to say, or even to conjecture, what his reflections would be on such an occasion, but it is possible to say what they would not be; certainly they would not approximate to anything ridiculous; they would not have the remotest connection with anything contemptuous, nor would they in the least verge on anything satirical. If, on the contrary, a Trollope of American renown were to cast her eye upon a Jewish face, what would her reflections be?—She should speak for herself:—'One reason why I do not always, and altogether, like some of the largest and most splendid parties of the monied aristocracy is, that I am so very sure to find myself unexpectedly, at some moment or other, entirely surrounded by a black-eyed, high-nosed group of . . . unmistakable Jews. I know and I reverence that improved principle of religion which teaches us to condemn no man's faith with any presumptuous feeling of personal superiority derived from our own; yet I have still enough of the old-time leaven about me to doubt if a strong affection for the society of the children of Israel be a duty positively imperative upon Christianity!'—*Jewish Chronicle.*

HATCHING FISH.

Hatching eggs by artificial heat is well known and extensively practised in China, as is also the hatching of fish. The sale of spawn for this purpose forms an important branch of trade in China. The fishermen collect with care, on the margin and surface of water, all the gelatinous matters that contain spawn of fish, which is then placed in an eggshell which has been fresh emptied, through a small hole, which is then stopped, and the shell is placed under a sitting fowl. In a few days, the Chinese break the shell in warm water (warmed by the sun). The young fish are then kept in water until they are large enough to be placed in a pond. This plan in some measure counteracts the great destruction of spawn by troll-nets, which have caused the extinction of many fisheries.—*Martin's China.*

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